



DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY

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News Advisory

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TECH EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS DIALOGUE'S 2018 ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE

Washington, D.C. September 14, 2018 — A capacity audience of Dialogue on Diversity aficionados, attending the 2018 Entrepreneurship/IT Conference **STEAM — Power for the XXI Century**, September 7th at the Rayburn House Office Building, heard incisive counsel on a lineup of key topics for economics and society in the information age.

The Dialogue presented its **2018 Corporate Excellence Award** to **Ms. Laura Berrocal**, an executive with **Charter Communications** in Washington, as part of the midday session. "This award," noted Cristina Caballero, Dialogue President, "basically honors corporations, but recognizes as well those stimulating and resourceful figures in the corporate team whose initiatives impart vitality and style to the corporation."

An OVERVIEW was presented by **Hon. Gregory Rohde**, former head of the National Telecommunication and Information Administration, who reviewed the dynamic relationship between newly emerging technologies and the intellectual and cultural renewals that they give rise to. It is likely, Mr. Rohde maintained, that the perhaps accelerating Information Technology revolution will similarly induce new structures in our own post-modern intellectual environment, all in ways that will become evident only after they have taken shape around us.

Bringing the focus to Entrepreneurship, **Hon. Luís Borunda**, Deputy Secretary of State for Maryland, laid out wise, ever good humored counsel, born of his own years as a business owner, to guide aspiring entrepreneurs. The basics -- values of a family relying on you, access to funding, often risking one's own modest financial cushion. Again, don't be an entrepreneur if you are apt to lose heart and look back, or if you wish assurance of leisure, or of a future profit, etc. There is risk, and the courageous and resourceful can make it pay. A sense of humor and encouragement are the springboard for the entrepreneurial launch.

The main Conference speaker was **Hon. Tony Cárdenas** of California, representing the San Fernando Valley (District 29), to which he has been repeatedly elected by overwhelming margins. His chief concerns range from a set of policy measures turning the juvenile justice system away from punitive, often blatantly class- and ethnically-distorted action, to more humane approaches, to the related matter of education, with a focus on basic information technology, inclusive of "coding", for students from elementary ages on. He has pushed efforts through public policy and civil society, to procure training for brave middle class youth: a necktie and white collar [corresponding emblems for young women], are the admission ticket, and you will be part of the middle class, with earnings soon to match.

Luís Aparicio, Minister Counselor at the Embassy of El Salvador, representing the Ambassador, **H.E. Claudia Ivonne Canjura de Centeno**, was welcomed in the Conference as an honored guest of the Dialogue.

While **Todd Valentine** of the **D.C Small Local Business Development Department**, reviewed his office's programs for entrepreneurship training and management, which are part and parcel of an entrepreneur-friendly city administration. A trio of Coding and IT training experts mapped the schema for intensive programs that are taking kids into the IT élite from middle school age and earlier, to programs for high school and college age and adults for coding and other IT tasks. **Dwight Barbour** laid out the systematic plan of approach to the basic pyramid of IT skills. **Bacilia Angel**, a Lead Systems Engineer with **Mitre Corporation**, and **Alicia C. Lane**, busily engaged with **TechBridge Girls**, a training program for students, 4th through 8th grades, drawn basically from minority communities in the Washington metro area, in the rudiments of Coding and IT.

A program highlight was the appearance in the concluding mid-afternoon session, of **Stacey Gray**, an honors graduate of the Georgetown University Law Center, now at the **Future of Privacy Forum** in Washington, reviewing the features of a variety of IoT (Internet of Things) systems, in homes and small business enterprises.

A prime highlight for the day was the launch of plans for **IT is a Girl's Best Friend**, a training program designed for Latina and other women entrepreneurs in IT skills, with emphasis on Coding. Latina women have often found themselves deficient in STEM and IT careers. The planned courses will be an opportunity for jobs requiring these skills. An orientation for 2018-19 will be held in October. We invite you to communicate your interest. Reserve your spot for this session, at **dialog.div@prodigy.net**.

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